



## UK-China Joint Research and Innovation Partnership Fund PhD Placement Programme

### Call Guidelines (for UK applicants)

#### 1. Background

The UK-China Joint Research and Innovation Partnership Fund (known in the UK as the Newton Fund, hereinafter referred to as “the Fund”) was established at the UK-China Summit in 2013. The Fund provides an important framework towards promoting increased research and innovation collaboration between the UK and China supporting long-term, sustainable partnerships and the economic growth of both countries.

Building up a talented pool of well trained, internationally active PhD students is an essential step towards establishing world-class research systems. Improving mobility at the PhD level is also an important factor in facilitating cross-border research collaboration, as connections made at this level can be sustained over longer periods of time and also benefit members of other research teams. It also offers PhD researchers support in terms of their intellectual development, career progression, access to existing and emerging world class facilities, and access to comparative research, environments and populations.

Therefore, the UK’s Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and China’s Ministry of Education have decided to jointly establish a 4-year (2015/16 to 2018/19) PhD Candidates Partnership Programme (hereinafter referred to as “the Programme”) under the Fund. The British Council, entrusted by BIS, will be responsible for the design and daily operation of the Programme on the UK side. The China Scholarship Council (CSC), entrusted by the Ministry of Education, will be responsible for the design and daily operation of the Programme on the Chinese side.

#### 2. Programme Overview

The programme will sponsor PhD students and their supervisors from the UK and China to spend a period of study of between three and 12 months (for PhD students) and up to three months (for supervisors) at higher education institutions in China or the UK. Placements must start between January and December 2016.

#### 3. Outcomes

The programme aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- development of individual capacity through international training and development opportunities
- cultivation of highly trained researchers in the UK and China with international experience who are able to contribute to research and innovation, thereby generating economic and social benefits for both countries



- participation of British and Chinese PhD students in international intellectual networks, building cultural understanding and fostering long-term sustainable research collaborations
- development of international joint training pathways
- raising awareness of the UK's and China's research strengths.

#### 4. Priority Sectors

Tackling global challenges – such as extreme weather conditions, urbanisation, access to affordable health care, food and energy security and meeting the social and economic needs of a growing population – requires an integrated research and innovation approach, bringing together communities from different disciplines, sectors and countries in high-quality collaborations. The Fund aims to build UK-China research and innovation collaborations centred on these shared research and innovation challenges, which have direct relevance to both the UK's and China's social welfare and economic development.

Funding is provided by the UK on the basis that it will be used to fund programmes that will contribute to the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment. The most decisive criteria in determining ODA eligibility is establishing the “economic development and welfare of developing countries” as the main objective.<sup>1</sup>

BIS and the Ministry of Education have agreed to support PhD placements in the following fields:

- health and life sciences (e.g. HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, neglected tropical diseases, child mortality, maternal health)
- environmental technologies (e.g. climate change, green technology, sustainable development, ecosystem services, resource scarcity)
- food and water security
- energy
- urbanisation
- education and creative economy for economic development and social welfare.

#### 5. Eligibility

On the UK side, applications will be considered from all UK institutions with a strong research record in the agreed fields. Host universities in China must be eligible to admit international students.<sup>2</sup>

UK PhD applicants should be UK passport holders. Candidates of other nationalities must hold passports from countries that have diplomatic relations with China. Chinese students studying for their PhDs at UK universities are not eligible.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on ODA, please visit <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclistofodarecipients.htm>

<sup>2</sup> For a list of Chinese universities eligible to admit international students, please visit <http://www.csc.edu.cn/Laihua/universityen.aspx>



## 6. Application

UK PhD applicants must complete an online application form at [laihua.csc.edu.cn](http://laihua.csc.edu.cn)<sup>3</sup> and print it off.

Each application must include both a PhD student and his/her supervisor. Applications without the involvement of a PhD student or supervisor will not be considered.

Applications must include endorsements from both the sending and receiving supervisors, with the latter's official confirmation that they will host the PhD student, duration of stay and level of fees they will charge.

Where there is a decision between a UK and Chinese supervisor to host each other's applicant students, there is no guarantee that both students' applications will be successful. In cases where only one student's application is successful, the partnering supervisor on the other side must host the applying student and their supervisor.

Named individuals must be provided in the application form. Once the application is approved, no change of the named applicants is permitted.

To apply, the following supporting documents are required:

- 1) a confirmation letter issued by the international office of the receiving Chinese university
- 2) a research proposal in English (1,000 – 3,000 words)
- 3) a copy of the highest obtained degree certificate
- 4) CVs of the supporting UK and Chinese supervisors
- 5) two recommendation letters
- 6) a statement<sup>4</sup> (no more than 2,000 characters) explaining how the proposed research will create a pathway to economic development and social welfare (for ODA eligibility check)
- 7) a cost estimation with a detailed breakdown of the costs expected to be incurred by the PhD student and his/her supervisor over the period of study.

Scanned copies of the printed online application form (including a passport photo and signature) should be submitted along with the above supporting documents to [newtonfundchina@britishcouncil.org.cn](mailto:newtonfundchina@britishcouncil.org.cn) by 23:59 pm GMT **10 October 2015**. All supporting documents should be numbered in the order as they are listed above. *(Please note, emails with attachments of more than 10MB in size may be blocked by the server. In this case, the supporting documents should be split across two or more emails that are clearly labelled as "part 1", "part 2", etc.)*

<sup>3</sup> Once registered, please choose the programme 'Chinese Government Scholarship' and enter the agency number 8264 to start your application.

<sup>4</sup> In the statement, please outline a plausible pathway showing how the research addressed by your PhD placement may contribute to the economic development and social welfare of China within a reasonable time frame (3-15 years). The pathway statement should be focused on potential tangible impacts and should be project-specific and not general.



Any enquiries about the UK-China Joint Research and Innovation Partnership Fund can also be sent to the above email address.

## 7. Funding Arrangement

### PhD students

- In accordance with the rules and regulations agreed with CSC, each student can visit the partner institution once for a period of between three and 12 months.
- Relevant costs incurred by UK PhD students will be covered by the UK government, including visa fees, international airfares (economy class), tuition fees, accommodation and stipend. Costs beyond the above arrangements will be borne by the students themselves.

### Mobility grants for PhD supervisors

- Mobility grants are intended to support UK PhD supervisors in visiting the host university during their students' placement for a total period of up to three months.
- UK supervisors must agree their plans with their partner institution and indicate this on the application form.
- Visa fees, international airfares (economy class), accommodation and stipend for UK PhD supervisors will be met by the UK government. Costs beyond the above arrangements will be borne by the PhD supervisors themselves or their institution.

In summary, the following expenditures will be covered by the UK government  
PhD students:

| Expenditure                                               | Standard                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Visa <sup>5</sup> fees and return airfare (economy class) | Up to £1,200                             |
| Medical care insurance <sup>6</sup>                       | £100                                     |
| Accommodation <sup>7</sup> in China                       | £100/month                               |
| Stipend in China                                          | £350/month                               |
| Tuition fee in China                                      | According to host universities' standard |

### PhD supervisors

| Expenditure                                  | Standard     |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Visa fees and return airfare (economy class) | Up to £1,200 |
| Medical care insurance                       | £100         |
| Accommodation in China                       | £60/day      |
| Stipend in China                             | £40/day      |

After the announcement of the final assessment results, the British Council will sign the grant agreements with the sending institutions and allocate the grants. The sending

<sup>5</sup> For visa application info, please see [here](#)

<sup>6</sup> For more information of medical insurance in China, please see [here](#)

<sup>7</sup> For more information about accommodation policy in China, please see [here](#)



institutions will make their own arrangements for covering the above expenditures for PhD students and supervisors.

## 8. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on the following principles:

- all questions on the application form are satisfactorily answered
- the proposed research area relates to at least one of the priority sectors
- the proposed research area is ODA eligible, i.e. the “main objective is establishing economic development and social welfare of developing countries”
- the planned activities demonstrate potential to deliver the planned outcomes in the most effective way
- participation in the programme will contribute towards developing sustainable institutional partnerships between the UK and China

Applicants should ensure their application meets all of the above criteria.

## 9. Evaluation Process

All the applications will be assessed by the British Council and CSC by 30 November 2015. The final results will be announced by the British Council and CSC by **15 December 2015**.

### Key Dates:

| Activities         | Dates            |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Applications open  | 30 July 2015     |
| Applications close | 10 October 2015  |
| Assessments end    | 30 November 2015 |
| Results announced  | 15 December 2015 |

## 10. Contract and Financial Agreement

A grant agreement for the placement of UK PhD students will be signed by the British Council and the UK sending institution. The sending institution will be responsible for:

- Providing financial accounts detailing how UK government funds have been spent on the PhD student and the supporting supervisor over the reporting period. These accounts should be submitted by the end of March during the placement period and within 30 days of completing the placement.
- Alerting the British Council to any substantial changes that may impact on the successful delivery of the planned outcomes as indicated in the application.



## 11. Reporting and Monitoring

Each UK PhD student and his/her supervisor will submit joint reports, detailing the placement progress and financial accounts, to the British Council. These joint reports must be submitted within 30 days of completing the placement.

## 12. Contact Points

For the British Council, please contact:

[newtonfundchina@britishcouncil.org.cn](mailto:newtonfundchina@britishcouncil.org.cn)

For the China Scholarship Council, please contact:

Liu Chao  
Project Officer  
Division of European Affairs  
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